

Life is beautiful...

...that's a feeling that Udayan Care, an institution for underprivileged children, has been trying to develop in the kids in its own unique way



PARA KUMAR

Nilakshi Bhattacharyya | Mayur Vihar

Twenty-something Swasthi recently donated Rs.2 lakh to Udayan Care, a home for orphaned and abandoned children. For a young woman, who has just started earning, this surely is an inspiring gesture. But what makes it even more heart-warming is the fact that she herself is a product of this institution that has given a new meaning to her life.

Swasthi, who was a school dropout when she first came to Udayan Care in 2002, was motivated to clear her Class XII. After that there was no looking back for her. She joined Rai University to do a diploma course in hospitality management. She spent the last year in the UK working as an apprentice at Quality Hotel, Leeds, where she was greatly appreciated. At present she is working at Hyatt Regency, New Delhi. Swasthi's case is not a

them feel a part of a family, we have mentor fathers and mothers. Further, all the children have the surname of Udayan," reveals Dr. Kiron Modi, the founder member of Udayan Care and mother of Udayan.

"Since most of the children come to us at slightly older age, they have to study a lot before they are absorbed into mainstream schools. So we have tutors, who help the kids with their studies. We have developed partnerships with schools such as Sanskriti, Delhi Public School, and others as well as Rai University, where our children are competing with the best. Our main endeavour has been

to bring these kids into the society and give them a respectable life," says Madhu Gupta, mentor mother of Udayan Ghar II in Mayur Vihar Phase I. They also have an interesting way of giving the children some financial security when they become adults.

"We have bank accounts in all the children's names. On various occasions, including birthdays and festivals, we give them money, besides the sponsorship money. A part of this money we deposit in their accounts. So when they are ready to leave the home, they have enough to begin something new," concludes Gupta.

A HOME FOR EVERYONE

Udayana Care has seven centres which include Udayan Ghar I in Sant Nagar, Delhi (inception- March 1996), parents 11 girls; Udayan Ghar II in Mayur Vihar, Delhi (inception- February 1999), parents 14 boys; Udayan Ghar III in Mehrauli, Delhi (inception- September 1999), parents 12 girls; Jagshanti Udayan Ghar IV in Greater Noida (inception- August 2003), parents 32 girls; Sat Krishna Udayan Ghar V in Gurgaon (inception- September 2004), parents 21 boys; Yakoov's Light Udayan Ghar VI in Noida (inception - March 2007), parents 10 boys.

- unique one. At present there are 103 children, in the age group of five to 17 years, under the umbrella of Udayan Care staying in its six homes.
- All this started with the dream of Udayan Modi, a young man who wanted to work for the disadvantaged children through affirmative action. Well, he is no more, but his family and friends have made sure that his dream comes true. What started with just one home with about 12 children in Sant Nagar in March 1996 has grown to have six homes in and around the capital. But the members associated with this institution are very clear that this is not an orphanage, but a home. "It is very important for a child's overall personality development to have a bond. So our main focus is to create rehabilitation family homes for these children, where they can grow up in a family-like atmosphere, sharing and caring for one another. And to make